View metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.uk
brought to you by CORE
provided by Research Papers in Economics

Knowledge and use of ICT in the agro-food field: the point of view of the formative processes.

Gianni Petino[1]

Abstracts

The development processes concerning the whole of society question our skills at transferring or receiving information, whether we are individual or a large community. Up to this time the formative processes carried out by public and private institutions show evident limits, anachronisms and paradoxes. The inefficacy of some of these formative paths is often due to the lack of the basic knowledge (and of its checking). Communication, along with its "abstraction", its high "informality" level and its important role in the development processes, help us to revise its value chain. Through our brief investigation, we pointed out some lacks. Firstly, about the approach to internet; then about surfing tools and, at last, about the "use of keywords". We gather a sample composed of 100 elements, clustered by gender, in the sphere of post-diploma, degree and post-degree courses during the 2002-2003 academic year, in two southern regions of Italy: Calabria and Sicily. The research field is the one of agro-food economics, both for the question topics and for the author's direct pertinence.

The results pointed out, through a descriptive statistic, inaccurate dynamics concerning the information communication technology (ICT); the gathered data showed a little familiarity both with the topics and with the tools.

Keywords: ICT, agro-food, keyword.

Introduction

The development processes concerning the whole of society, besides their incredible rapidity, question our skills at transferring or receiving information, whether we are individual or a large community, particularly in those areas with a delayed growth. The chosen area is within the target 1 regions[2].

The formative processes carried out by public and private institutions up to this time show evident limits, anachronisms and paradoxes. The inefficacy of some of these formative paths is often due to lack of the basics knowledge (and of its checking).

Description of the sample

The gathered sample is composed of 100 individual persons, clustered by gender. The interview was made through a proper questionnaire, inside the second level institutions, the

[1] Gianni Petino, Department STAFA economics agrarian section, Agrarian Faculty, University Mediterranea of the Study of Reggio Calabria www.agraria.unirc.it, Italy, petinog@unict.it.
[2] European regions eligible under Objective 1 need structural adjustment and have slower development than other regions. The Italian regions eligible under Objective 1 or receiving transitional support are: Campania, Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sicily, Sardinia and Molise.

university, the doctor's degree or upper level. The individual persons of the sample were selected between the students that attend post-diploma courses, university courses, PhD courses. The sample is composed of women (45%) and man (41%), aged between 18 and 43 (14% of the sample doesn't reveal the gender). All of theme are students, but some of them refers to an actual job or to the lack of it.

Their qualification goes from diploma to the researcher degree. They come from Calabria and Sicily, specially from: Catania and its district, Siracusa and its district, Reggio Calabria and its district, plus a 23% composed of other town and districts. 60% of the sample often uses internet, male and female at 58,5% and 57,8 respectively; nearly the 30% of the sample occasionally uses Internet (male and female at 31,7 and 28,9 respectively), while the remain 10% never uses Internet. It's possible read these data, clustered by gender, in the following graphics (graphs 1 – 5).

Empiric test

The first part of the questionnaire helps to point out the knowledge and use of the basic information tools: search engines[3], portals[4] and malls[5]. The obtained informations led us to the identification of 17 search engines (some of which are portal-like); each interviewee doesn't use more than 3 search engines[6]. Regarding to the knowledge and use of portals and malls, the answers show that the 57% of the sample doesn't use this tools.

In the second part of the questionnaire there were questions regarding the use of Internet to search agro-food products and, specifically, to find out what kind of agro-food products they searched.

The third part of the questionnaire was about the use of keywords in particular, we asked which keywords each interviewees would use to find informations about: oils, salted meats , wines, cheeses, vegetables, fruits and typical products in general (Graphs 6 – 11).

The prevailing use of simple keywords denotes a poor knowledge of the problems connected to the Internet searching; in this case the results are complicated and full of inadequate sites[7].

Such results are caused by defect of the questionnaire: in fact the answers often reported the same keywords as seen in the questionnaire (eg. Which keyword would you use to search information on wines? = wines). Similarly, the sixth question refers to typical products and the answer report more complex keywords (composed of 2 two words, eg. Typical products).

---

[3] Search engines are web-sites that allow the search by terms or topics inside their data-bases. They permit to find *Url* through keywords.

[4] Portals are specialized web-sites that offer aggregate information.

[5] Malls are virtual shopping areas.

[6] The interviewees declare they do not use more than 3 search engines despite they know more search engines.

[7] Incongruous sites are those sites without any relation with the object of the research. The high number of the incongruous sites is one of the limits of any web research.

All the complex gathered from all the questions seem interesting as they report keywords with characteristics of the product, geographical references and other elements useful to obtain better results from the query (graphs 12 – 16).

Conclusions

The results of the research pointed out a little accurate dynamics about ICT; the gathered data also showed a lack of "experience" regarding both the topics and the tools, in spite of the types of courses attended by the interviewees. Our aim was essentially to point out the interviewee's familiarity with the information researches in Internet. So we found out that knowing their familiarity with tools such as search engines, portals and malls, we also discovered some critical points.

Same estimations has to be made regarding to the keywords, due to the almost complete inexperience in the use of them. This inquiry is preliminary and could be considered as a first step (demand analysis). The aim of this research sector is to formulate a referring model for the management of information in Internet, considering that ICT bases on key elements such as formative processes.

References

AA.VV. 1999, Strumenti di formazione in agricoltura, INEA, Roma.

AA.VV. 2002, I servizi di ICT, ed. SDA Bocconi, Milano.

ASFOR-SMAU 2003, E-learning: giovani talenti crescono, in "L'impresa" n. 6, Milano.

ASFOR 2003, Verso l'E-learning di nuova generazione, in "L'impresa" n. 4, Milano.

Fritz M.-Schiefer G. 2003, Identification and evaluation of internet resources for agribusiness information needs, in "Atti della 4ª Conferenza EFITA", Budapest - Debrecen.

Fritz M.-Schiefer G. 2003, Dynamic market monitoring for agro-food industries over the internet, in "Atti della 4ª Conferenza EFITA", Budapest - Debrecen.

Perrone G. 2003, Corporate University: internet e dintorni, in "L'impresa" n. 6, Milano.

Petino G.-Rizzo M. 2003, E-commerce in Sicily: sicilian oil and wine, in "Atti della 4ª Conferenza EFITA", Budapest - Debrecen.

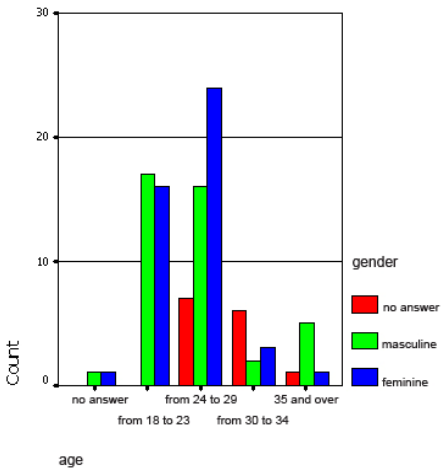
Prandelli E.-Verona G. 2003, La rete e l'assorbimento della conoscenza del cliente per l'innovazione, in "E&M" n.4, Milano.

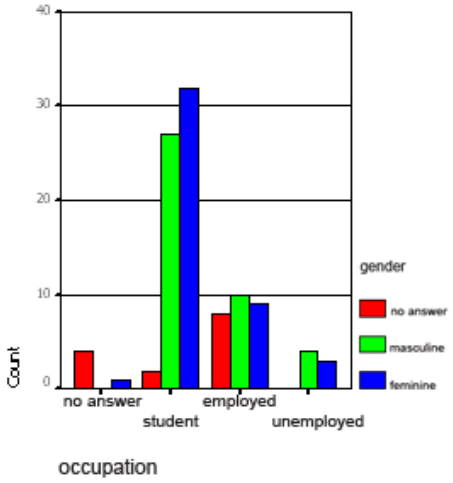
Rullani E. 2003, Lavorare in rete, in "E&M" n.4, Milano.

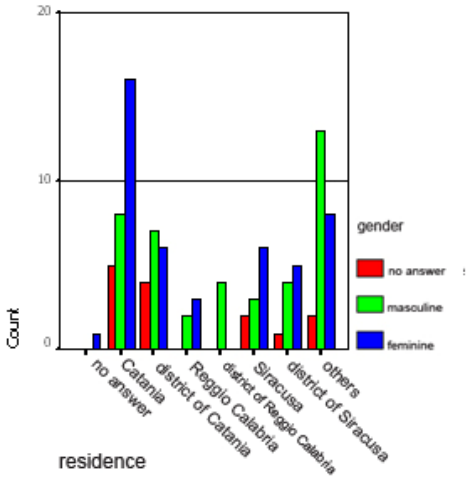
SMAU 2003, Il mercato dell'ICT alla fine del tunnel, in "L'impresa" n. 6, Milano.

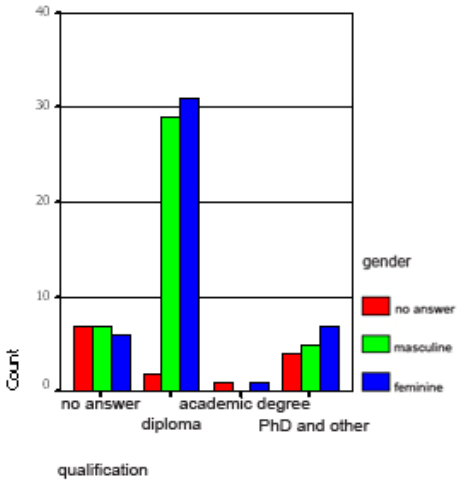
Figures

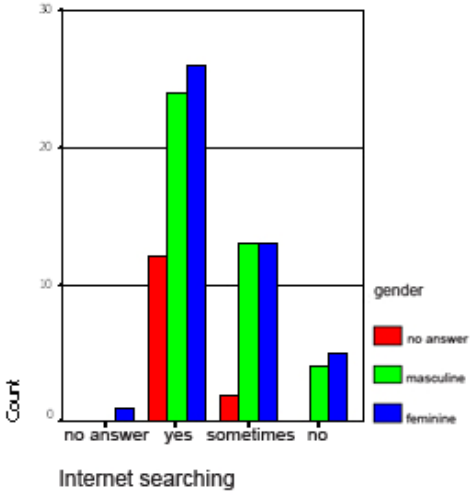
Graphs 1 - 5



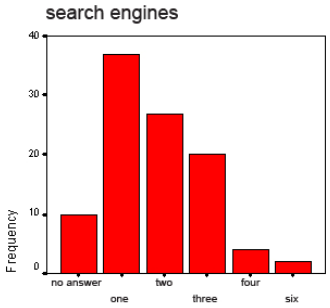


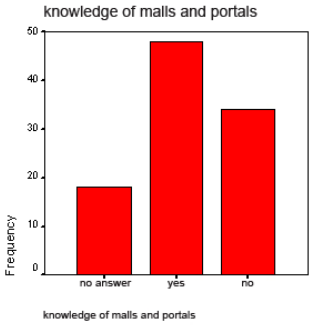


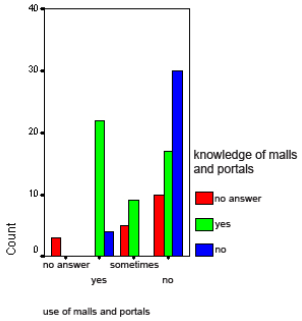




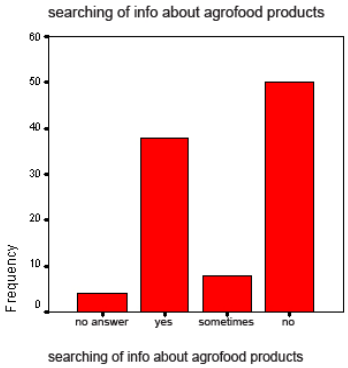
Graphs 6- 9



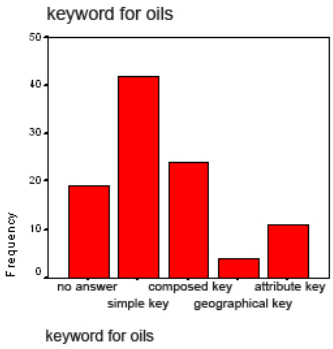


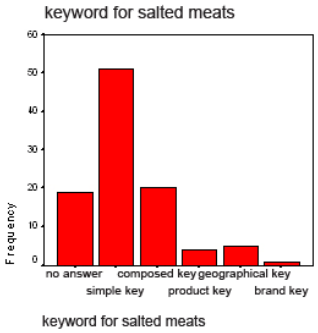


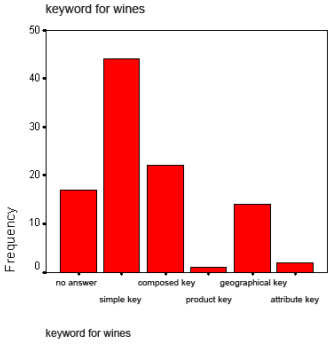
Graphs 10 - 11



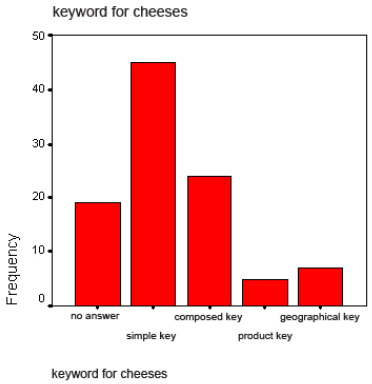
Graphs 12 - 14



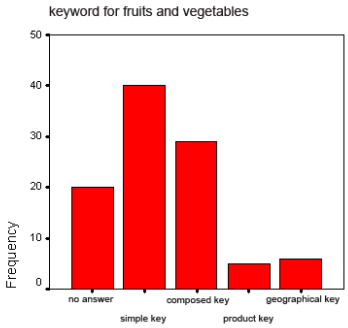




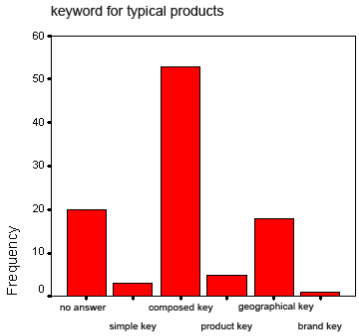
Graphs 15 - 17



keyword for cheeses



keyword for fruits and vegetables



keyword for typical products